The Father's laſt Office perform'd for his Child.

A

SERMON

Preached in the Pariſh-Church of

Middleton-Stony,

IN THE

County of OXFORD,

June the 21ſt 1696.

At the Funeral of his Only Daughter

Mrs. *Suſanna Offley*,

Who departed this Life the Eighteenth Day of the ſame Month; Aged *Two Years and a Quarter.*

By *WILLIAM OFFLEY*, Rector of the ſaid Pariſh.

God hath taken away my Heart, Cant. iv. 9.

LONDON:
Printed by T. Milbourn, for R. Clavel, at the *Peacock* in St. *Paul*'s Church-yard. 1696.

A

SERMON

Preached in the Parish-Church of

Middleton-Stony,

IN THE

County of OXFORD,

June the 21st 1696.

At the Funeral of his Only Daughter

Mrs. *Susanna Offley*,

Who departed this Life the Eighteenth Day of the same Month; Aged *Two Years and a Quarter.*

By WILLIAM OFFLEY, Rector of the said Parish.

God hath taken away my Heart, Cant. iv. 9.

LONDON:
Printed by E. Gilbourn, for B. Clavel, at the Peacock in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1696.

To the INHABITANTS of MIDDLETON-STONY.

IT was *frequently the Practiſe of the Ancients to repeat large Panegyricks at the Tombs of thoſe who were nobly deſcended; whilſt others of an inferiour Rank and Quality were laid up in their Graves with a becoming Silence. And in ſuch a ſilent manner my late* dear Child *had been Interr'd, but that I hoped, by venting of my melancholy Thoughts in this nature, to eaſe myſelf a little of that Burthen of Sorrow, which the ſad occaſion of her Death had laid upon me. I need not now inform you, that theſe following Reflections were Compos'd and Preach'd, whilſt I labour'd under unſpeakable Difficulties both of Thought and Speech; and tho' I muſt own they are imperfect, yet, by being made publick, they may chance to prove the happy Occaſion of more perfect Productions, in pacifying the Minds of thoſe* that mourn for the Dead. *And whilſt I thus ſtudy for your Spiritual Good, I hope to reap* that Peace at the laſt which the World cannot give. *That we may all live together, to* God's *Glory, and Honour, and Praiſe, is the Prayer of*

Your moſt Affectionate Friend,

WILLIAM OFFLEY.

JOB I. 21.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.

AMongſt all the Chriſtian Virtues, there is none ſo general and comprehenſive in its nature, ſo great and excellent in its worth and dignity, as *Love*; that Divine Fire, which warms the Paſſions, and cloſely unites the Affections of Men, ſo that they are happily inſtructed in the knowledge of this Truth, *That there is nothing pleaſes God more, nor advances the honour of Chriſtianity, than the free exerciſe of Piety and Charity, which we all are bound to expreſs one towards another.* This Flame, (whatever Orders and Degrees of Chriſtians it reacheth) never fails to kindle and quicken ſuch holy Deſires, which incline them to be *merciful, tender-hearted, ready to pity the Afflicted,* and lament

their Misfortunes, eſteeming them as their own, ſince they are common, and may be felt (if it pleaſe God) by all Mankind at one time or another. This undiſſembled Paſſion of *Love* more eſpecially nouriſheth, and ſupports that natural Affection, which Parents entertain for their Children: The like was cheriſh'd to a high degree in the Heart of Father *Jacob*; of ſuch importance was his Love, that we read *his Soul was bound up in the life of his Child*; ſo that when the Thread of that darling Life happens to be broken, and the Child die, then the ſad Parent, by natural conſequence, will burſt forth into Tears, and with the mournful Prophet complain, ſaying, *My Soul melteth, yea, droppeth* (as the marginal Note is) *for heavineſs: ſtrengthen Thou me, O my God, according unto thy Word.*

Gen. 44. 30.

Pſal. 119. 28.

And now, in this days ſore tryal and humiliation both of my Soul and Body; whilſt, with *Job*, I am become a *mournful Father*, for the loſs of all that Innocen-

cy

cy and promiſing Virtue which ſo lately liv'd, and began to bloſſom, in the Infant-Actions and Inclinations of *Her*, who lies here dead before us; I earneſtly beg of *God* the gift of Patience, which *Job* manifeſts he was indu'd with in the day of his Viſitation, by theſe words which I have read unto you, and are now made the Subject of my melancholy Meditations.

In this Chapter of my Text you may read at large a Catalogue of thoſe many Miſeries which befel both a great and a holy Man; and tho' ill News compoſeth almoſt every Verſe of it, and ſuch a Deluge of Sorrow broke in furiouſly upon him, ſo that it clean ſwept away all his well-gotten Subſtance and Encreaſe, yet you will not find that *Job* expreſs'd any Concern, for he held his Peace, and ſpake nothing; he kept ſilence, tho' certainly (according to the meaſure of our own natural and human Conceptions) it was Pain and Grief to him.

him. But when the laſt Meſſenger arriv'd in ſuch haſte, that he ſeem'd to interrupt the former *while he was yet ſpeaking*, and acquainted *Job* with the violent and ſudden Death of his *Sons* and *Daughters*,

Pſ. 119. 18.

V. 19.

Then Job *aroſe, and rent his Mantle, and ſhaved his Head, and fell down upon the ground and worſhipped, and ſaid,* Naked *came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked ſhall I return thither: The* Lord *gave, and the* Lord *hath taken away; Bleſſed be the Name of the* Lord.

V. 20.

V. 21.

Theſe words our holy Church has long ſince injoyn'd to be read, as often as *We Mourners* enter this ſacred place, to perform theſe Chriſtian Offices, and ſolemnize the Funerals of the Dead. And whatſoever impreſſions they may chance to make upon you that hear me this day; moſt certain is it that they naturally confine me to conſider theſe following particulars, if ſorrow (which lieth hard upon my *Spirits*) ſhall at preſent give leave.

See the Office for Burial.

1ſt,

1ſt, *What it was the Lord gave me.*

2dly, *What it is that He hath taken away from me.*

3dly, *I ſhall endeavour to ſhow, that it is my Duty, at this time in particular, and Yours alſo in general, under all Sufferings and Troubles, to Bleſs the Name of the Lord.*

The firſt Particular conſiderable is, *What it was the Lord gave me.* And this Reflection in an inſtant ſeems to rouze up and revive my heavy Soul, whilſt my willing Thoughts fly backwards, and I am carried along, as it were, in a pleaſing Dream, (for, alas, 'tis no better) to review my *Dear Babe*, adorn'd in her firſt Attire, when ſhe *was wrapped in Swaddling-Clothes, a Child of a ſpan long.* Then did the Lord make me a *glad Father of a lovely Child*; pardon me if *I* tranſgreſs in her Character, ſince Natural Love obliges me thus publickly to acknowledge, that ſhe was

the

the Joy of my Heart. In the fortunate day of her *Birth*, *I* had reaſon, yea, great reaſon, to proclaim the excellency of God's Gift to me, and with admiration
Pſal. 127.3. to cry out, *Lo, Children are an Heritage of the Lord, and the Fruit of the Womb is his Re-*
V. 4. *ward: As the Arrows are in the hand of a migh-*
V. 5. *ty man, ſo are Children of Youth: Happy is the man that hath his Quiver full of them; they ſhall not be aſham'd, but they ſhall ſpeak with the Enemies in the Gate.*

Such a deep and religious ſenſe had the Pſalmiſt of God's Mercy, in giving to Parents a numerous and happy Offſpring, being warm'd himſelf with *Paternal Affection*, fill'd with Bowels of Mercy and Tenderneſs, he could not refrain his Tears, when he wept in the bitterneſs of his very Soul, for the death of his Son, tho' he was ſlain in *open Hoſtility and unnatural Rebellion* againſt him, who was both his *Father and his King*, which *render'd the Rebel doubly odious in the ſight of God*; the manner of *David*'s mourning

you

you have recorded in theſe words; *O my Son* Abſolom, *my Son, my Son* Abſolom! *would God I had died for thee, O* Abſolom, *my Son, my Son.* 2 Sam. 13. 33.

Nothing ſo ſweet as the Breath of my Child, the *Heathen* could ſay; and the *Chriſtian* may well affirm, That Children ought to be as dear to their Parents as their own Lives; they are the bountiful Gifts of Heaven, and recommend themſelves to our Fatherly Care and Protection by many reſpects.

1*ſt*, Becauſe no leſs a Perſon than the Eternal God gives us them, that we may not want a Bleſſing, whereby His All-ſaving Mercies may be continually had in remembrance; whilſt we train up our Children in His fear, and to His glory. Every Gift of God is good, a Son, or a Daughter, none of the leaſt, and therefore ought to be of great price to us.

2*dly*, Children ought to be dear to us, in reſpect that they are thoſe hopeful

Plants, which are growing up to the future distinction of Families, the honour of Houses, the maintenance and continuance of this transitory World; for they are those in whom we may hereafter live, tho' we are dead and gather'd to our Fathers. Our Children are Partakers of our Flesh and Blood; divine Fruit; the pleasant and familiar Companions of our Joy and Comfort in times of Prosperity; and when the Cloud of Adversity breaks, and pours down upon us, they (happy Innocents, whose Minds never feel any impressions of Trouble, and therefore can sport and laugh in the midst of danger, and do more than their *Fathers*, by outbraving the fury of it) serve to lessen our fears and tormenting apprehensions of Ruine, whilst they divert our Thoughts by many pretty endearing Actions and Expressions, which we both perceive and hear.

3*dly*, A third reſpect, whereby our Children challenge our beſt Care and Tenderneſs, is, Becauſe they free *the Wife of our Boſom* from being call'd *Barren* or *Unfruitful*. And how great a Mercy this is, the ſacred Records of the Law abundantly inform us; for, under the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy and Diſpenſation, we find, that Barrenneſs was look'd on as a ſevere Curſe, both to the Earth and her Inhabitants. Thus much *David* intimates, where he ſaith, That *God turns a fruitful Land into barrenneſs*; and the reaſon there given is, *Becauſe of the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* Pſal. 107. 34.

The Affliction of being Barren was ſo infamous, that *Rachael* cries out, *Give me Children, or elſe I dye*: So earneſt of ancient days, in the firſt Ages of the World, were the Peoples deſires to have *Sons* and *Daughters*, that they might become *Nurſing Fathers and Nurſing Mothers* in the Earth. And 'tis not to be denied, but that the ſame *longing Deſire* dwells to this Gen. 30. 1.

day in us, who are Partakers of the ſame Corruptions, and are as ſubject as any that have liv'd before, to have our Paſſions increaſe, and our Deſires to be inlarged, and grow importunate about the attainment of that Bleſſing which Nature prompts us to, and takes pleaſure in.

It was *that bleſſed Child* (whoſe Body we *now weep* over, whilſt her infant and pure Soul is return'd to God, and preſented at his Throne by the Hands of *Angels*, who rejoice to behold ſo much Innocence, ſo Heavenly, and agreeable to their *own*) *that God gave me*, for her ſake, that her Memory may be laſting, I labour to perform [oh! that I could do greater things for her] this laſt ſacred Office: Which leads me to conſider,

2dly, *What it is God hath taken away from me.*

You all are ſenſible, my Friends, that *God*

God hath taken away from me that Child, which He not * long ſince was pleas'd to give. Methought it was ſome ſort of Comfort (if there is any ſuch thing to be enjoy'd whilſt we ſtand on the Brink of a Grave, *and commend the Bodies of our Friends to Duſt and Aſhes*) to treat of my firſt Particular, which employ'd my Thoughts upon *what the Lord gave me*; *A Child*, (I cannot forbear to repeat the Bleſſing, tho' I am in ſorrow bereft of it) *A Daughter*, dear to me; and I have reaſon to think ſhe was beloved of all you, who were known unto her, and acquainted with her good Nature. But tho' the Love of her *Father*, *and truly tender and affectionated Mother*, and the Kindneſs of many of you here preſent, was ſo great, and often expreſs'd towards her; yet ſurely ſhe was *more* belov'd of God, fit for His Everlaſting Kingdom, for *of ſuch it is compos'd*: And therefore *God hath taken her away*;

* Born *March* 19. 1694.

Mar. x. 14.

away; the Bloſſom ſcarce appearing, is cut off, and blaſted by the Breath of the Almighty's Diſpleaſure, Who for our Sins is diſpleaſed with us. God never puniſheth his Creatures, but when He is provok'd by their Impiety; this *kindles the Wrath of the Lord againſt his People, inſomuch that He once abhorred his own Inheritance.* And now, O Lord, with the Prophet we may juſtly cry out; *Behold, Thou art wroth, for we have ſinned*; yea, thy Wrath and Indignation lieth hard upon us, for thou haſt cauſed the Sun of our *Only Daughter* to go down into the loweſt degrees of darkneſs e're it was ſcarce riſen: She was (as *Moſes* expreſſeth it in his Prayer) *flouriſhing in the Morning*, but at *Noon day* (e're the Evening came) *ſhe was cut down and wither'd*; for, about the* ſame time of the Day that ſhe *drew* her Firſt Breath in this Life, ſhe *ſigh'd* and *breath'd forth* her Laſt.

Pſ. 106.40.

Pſal. 90.6.
* She was Born between One and Two of clock in the Afternoon, and died between the ſame hours.

And

And now (O ye my Friends) is a rehearſal of all my Sorrow nothing to you that hear it? Yea; I am ſure, that many of you cannot with-hold your Tears, nor conceal your Trouble, whilſt in the calamitous *Affliction* which has ſo lately befallen me and mine, you ſadly review your own. You (unhappy Fathers with myſelf!) who have heretofore *been* afflicted with the loſs of your Children, muſt needs this day call to remembrance your former Grief, when *your Bowels did yearn towards your Children*, and they which *you* delighted in were taken away from you. And you (tender Mothers) who bore ſo much *beautiful Fruit*, which you had pluckt off from you, and carried to the Grave long ſince, cannot forbear this day calling to mind your *Travailing in Pain*, and with *Her*, that is now in the *Houſe of Mourning*, *a ſorrowful Mother*,

Mother, to lament for the Dead Now, through the Veil and Cloud of *my own Sorrow*, I can ſee the effects of Sadneſs in many of your Countenances, whilſt you think on the Death of your *Fathers* and *Mothers*, *Husbands* and *Wives*, *Sons* and *Daughters*, *Friends* and *Acquaintance*, who are intomb'd and laid up in the Graves, (*thoſe devouring Sepulchres*) which We are all near unto; and tho' they are now in outward appearance adorn'd, *and Flowers and Graſs* (the Emblems of Life in the Morning, and the Repreſentatives of Death in the Evening) flouriſh together thereon; yet there is rottenneſs within; for underneath lies Death in all its ghaſtly Pomp; Your Friends Bones dry, and their Bodies crumbled into their primitive Duſt. Our calling to mind all this, is grievous and wounding, and for this we ſhed Tears; but tho' Rivers of Tears ſhould run down from our

Eyes

Eyes into the Graves of the Dead, yet they add no quickening moiſture to them, who are, in *David*'s ſence, *turn'd to the drought of Summer.* But Sighs will cauſe the Heart to throb, and Tears will flow, tho' they are of no advantage to the Dead; We cannot be free from ſuch effects of Sorrow and Heavineſs, whilſt we depoſite the Bodies of our *Friends* in the Grave, where they will be hid from our Eyes, *and be no more ſeen.*

Pſal. 32. 4.

Now my *Dear Child* muſt be laid into the Grave: This, I confeſs, is neceſſary, but yet 'tis wounding to me for to take this long farewel: I have no reaſon to expoſtulate with my ſad Soul, as the Prophet *David* did, ſaying, *Why art thou ſo caſt down, O my Soul? And why art thou ſo diſquieted within me?* The occaſion of my heavineſs is too viſible to be enquir'd into; and in this extremity

Pſal. 42. 5.

the only Expedient to be found for relief, is, for me and my Houſe to *put our*
Pſal. 42. 11. *Confidence in the Lord.* Put thy Truſt, *hope thou in God*, was *David*'s Counſel to his troubled Soul; and that's the ſureſt Way, there is none like unto it; for when we are bereav'd of our *Kindred and Friends*, by truſting in God, we are ſupported, and kept from murmuring and repining at the Misfortunes which befal us. Which prepares the Way, in the third and laſt place, for me to endeavour to ſhew,

That it is my Duty, at this time in particular, and Yours alſo in general, under all Sufferings and Troubles, to Bleſs the Name of the Lord.

It is certain, that amongſt all the Miſeries incident to us in this Life, Grief is the ſharpeſt, the only eſſential Evil, which is moſt felt: And whilſt any

any of us ſtruggle, and groan under the Chains and Preſſures thereof, and altogether ſubject ourſelves to the Rule and Government of our own natural Paſſions and Affections, we are apt to be overcome of Trouble, and caſt down, ready to complain, *That God ſtands afar off, and hides himſelf in times of Trouble: How long wilt Thou (O God) forget us for ever? How long ſhall we take Counſel in our Souls, having Sorrow in our Hearts daily? Conſider and hear us, O Lord; lighten our Eyes, leſt we ſleep the Sleep of Death.*

Pſal. 10. 1.
Pſal. 13. 1.
V. 2.
V. 3.

Thus we may perceive, that whilſt we reflect upon the Evils which are brought on us, ſo as to conſider them ſimply, as they are in themſelves, we are ſoon fill'd with ſtrange Paſſions, and wicked Diſtruſt of God's Power and Mercy, which He can ſhow in our defence and deliverance when it pleaſeth Him. Hence we are betray'd

to Impatience, We grow uneaſie and reſtleſs under our Afflictions; whereas We ought, in the day of diſtreſs, to conſider, that God's Compaſſions fail not thoſe that quietly ſubmit themſelves to the juſt determinations of his Wiſdom and Providence; And notwithſtanding ſo *few* Remedies appear to baniſh and chaſe away the Anguiſh and Pain of a Wounded and Contrite Heart, yet GOD contrives Ways and Means to aleviate our *weight*; He furniſheth us with Reaſon and Abilities, to direct and ſtrengthen us under the ſharp Conflict which we meet withal, whilſt the *Sorrows* of our Heart are many, and Miſery and Woe are in our Habitations. And tho' all this be *now* come upon us, yet *we* may *Bleſs the Name of God*, whilſt *we* conſider with ourſelves,

Firſt,

First, *The Reason of our being now, or at any other Season, ſorely Afflicted.*

There is a Common Neceſſity which is belonging to, and intail'd upon us, who are Partakers of the ſame Corruption, to endure and fall into divers Misfortunes; the greateſt Favourites of Heaven, and the very beſt of God's People, have never yet been known to eſcape them altogether. And though holy *David*, from the time of his Youth to his Old-age, profeſſeth, *That he never ſaw the Righteous forſaken, nor his Seed begging Bread*: yet he was by Woful Experience ſenſible, that the Troubles of the Righteous were many. If ſo be then that ſuch are often Wounded, and hid in the Grave, and ſhare in the Common Lot of all thoſe that are *born in the Fleſh*, who have *Corruption for their Father, and the Worm for their Mother*, what

Pſal. 37. 25.

Job 17. 14.

what reaſon have I, or You, above others, who are and have been more juſt and upright in their ways and doings, to expect an exemption from Trouble? Why ſhould we Parents be offended, and with reluctancy undergo that Sorrow which hath already ſeiz'd us, and will, ſo long as the World abides, continue to wound other Parents in the Fleſh, who may be (God knoweth) in every reſpect as Unhappy (e're the Sun has run his courſe this day) as *We* are in the death of my *Beloved Child*, whoſe *Grave* is now open, and ſhe is *going down to the Bars of*
Job 17. 16. *the Pit*, where (one time or another) *our Reſt together ſhall be in the Duſt.*

Secondly, *We may be brought to Bleſs the Name of God, by conſidering the Juſtice of our being Afflicted.*

It is a natural thing; *We* are all Heirs to Trouble, in *Sorrow* was our conce-

ption;

ption; and for us to wiſh to be *wholly* free from Affliction, is *Injuſtice*: for, what is more becoming us *Chriſtians*, than patiently to yield our Necks to the Yoke, and ſubmit ourſelves to the *Laws*, the *Unalterable Laws*, of our *own* frail Condition. *We are born to die*, the one is as natural as the other, for *Duſt we are, and to Duſt we ſhall all return.* The time of our departure is uncertain, and not to be known by us, but it is very ſure; we need not any more Inſtances to convince us (I hope) of Death, and the Diſſolution of our *Earthly Tabernacle*. How many Sons and Daughters in the Fleſh are remember'd by us to have died in the *Birth*, *others in the Cradle*? *How many have juſt began to go, and then ſtumbled, and fell into the Grave, from whence there is no redemption*? Others we ſee are luſty and ſtrong, and advance many Stages farther; but let the Race be never ſo long, and the

Job 5. 7.

Eccl. 3. 20.

num-

number of our miſerable days never ſo great, yet an end will be put to the former, and the Sum-total of the latter will be ſoon caſt up, *and all our Thoughts ſhall periſh*; and then in darkneſs and ſilence ſhall we all be cover'd, until God awakes us to Judgment; *when the Dead* (according to St. *John*'s Viſion) *ſmall and great, ſhall ſtand before God; and the Books ſhall be opened, and the Dead ſhall be judged out of thoſe things which are written in the Books, according to their Works.*

Rev. 20. 12.

Wherefore (my Beloved Brethren, Heirs of the ſame Promiſe which Chriſt has given us) ſince there is ſo much *Juſtice* in the matter of our being *afflicted*, whether the Evil be felt in the loſs of *Infants*, of *Children*, of *Youth*, of any of thoſe that are related in any reſpect to us; let us learn in this our day, that it is our Duty to undergo with Patience the weight of theſe momentary

Af-

Afflictions, always remembring to *Bleſs the Name of the Lord.*

Thirdly, My Duty and Yours, in this Caſe, will be further evident, if we reflect a little upon that Reaſon which God hath given us to conſider, That if our Grief (of what nature and kind ſoever it be) continue long, it is generally found to be light and moderate; and ſo, there is no ſuch preſſing neceſſity (ſuch as Paſſion often begets in us) of greatly complaining. And put the caſe, (*as it was lately in the Sickneſs of my dear Child*) if our Miſery be violent, and the Feaver, which boils up the Blood of a ſcarlet dy, malignant in all its appearances and attacks which it makes on the Body; why then 'tis obſerv'd to be ſhort, and ſpeedily ends either itſelf or the Patient, which comes all to one end. If we recover our Bodily Strength, and conquer our

Diſeaſe, then we have reaſon to *Bleſs the Name of God*: And if it happen that the *Diſeaſe* carries us off, and we ſink and die under it; then thoſe that ſurvive are bound to *Bleſs the Name of God*, for taking us away from the Miſeries of this ſinful World, that our Souls may be happy in the Preſence of God.

Fourthly, When we ſuffer any Misfortune in this Life, we ought to conſider, That it is our Bodies which are haraſs'd and worn out by the Torment and Convulſions of it: We ourſelves are not offended, for the Offence diminiſheth the Excellency and Perfection of the thing; and we may be ſure, that Affliction is ſo far from leſſening or diminiſhing, that on the contrary it ſerveth for a Subject of commendable Patience, much more than an entire freedom (if there were any ſuch thing here

here in *this World*) from Trouble doth; and where there is more occaſion of Commendation, 'tis certain there is not leſs occaſion of Good If the Body (and none will deny this) be the Inſtrument of the Spirit, what reaſon is there for us to complain, when 'tis employ'd in its proper Office? The *Body* is made to adminiſter to, and ſerve the *Soul*; ſo that ſhould the *Soul* afflict itſelf for the Accidents of this World, which arreſt the *Body*, then would it appear to wave its Noble Privilege, and by ſtooping to the ſervice of the *Body*, perform that which it was not deſtinated by *GOD* and *Nature* unto. It is poſſible for a Man that is over-curious, and fond of *this World's* Goods, to afflict himſelf when they miſcarry, and he is ſpoil'd of them; not only things of great moment, but the moſt trivial inconſiderable matters, ſerve to encreaſe his Vexation, and

raiſe his Spleen and Choler, when they periſh, and come to an end. But the man that is of an excellent *Spirit*, indu'd with a more noble *Soul* and *Reputation*, regards the Pleaſures of this World as not worth poſſeſſing, at leaſt not worth over-much Care and Sollicitude, either in their enjoyment or their deſtruction. Such a one reflects on his *Body* as but a borrow'd Garment, to ſet him forth for a ſhort ſeaſon, whilſt he is traverſing this low and troubleſome Stage of the World; whence it is that he *ſuffers all things, endures all things* with Chriſtian Magnanimity and Patience, *Bleſſing and Praiſing the Name of God.*

Thus that happy Man, who inures and accuſtoms himſelf to ſeek Content in his Soul in the time of Trouble, he is ſure to find Eaſe, and not to forget that it is his Duty to ſpeak well of GOD, at all times, and in all cir-

circumſtances of Life, whether they be joyous or grievous unto him: But when we quit the Example of the good Man, who is ſo patient, that he ſeems to rejoice in the midſt of *Afflictions*; and we begin to entertain too great a Commerce with the Body, being reſtleſs in our Minds; then do Grief and Trouble ſoon grow predominant, and inſult over us, becauſe we give up the Ghoſt, as it were, and are pale with Cowardice, ready to faint away, whilſt our Joynts ſmite each other through Fear and Trembling, at the miſtaken Power of that Affliction which befals us, which cannot hurt the Soul, tho' it ſlay the Body.

I would not here be underſtood, as if we ſhould appear to have no ſenſe of *Sorrow*, whilſt we lie under the ſeverity of God's Puniſhments, *Weeping and Mourning* will accompany us at ſuch a juncture; it being impoſſible for Nature

ture (unleſs all Affection be chill'd and extinct in her) to ſponge up or congeal thoſe ſalt Springs and Ebullitions which feed and ſupply the Eyes with Tears Day and Night. This Paſſion, above all others, our Bleſſed Lord, the Eternal *Saviour of the World*, was filled with, when he arriv'd at the *Grave* of *Lazarus, and wept and groan'd in himſelf.*

John 11. 35, 38.

The like Paſſion of Love accompanied the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, and Confeſſors; and in their manifeſtation of it, they offended not *God*, who hath given unto us natural Affections, and they will exert themſelves as Occaſion, in this day, ſadly offers itſelf. *Sighs, and Groans, and Tears* are a vent to our *Sorrow* which we conceive for the death of our Friends; they are not ſuch Inſtances of a deſponding and impatient Mind, as *ſome* conclude they are; for, even in the height of our Trouble (whilſt the

Tear:

Tears fall down and ſcald our Checks, and ſerve to darken and diſtract the *Sight* of the *Bodily Eye*) we may (*both in our Bodies and in our Spirits, which are God's*) glorifie and bleſs His Name, and beg of Him, not to ſuffer us to be this day ſorry (*as thoſe without Hope*) *for this happy Child*, which is cut off from the *Evil to come*, and (I truſt in GOD) *now ſleeps in CHRIST.*

1 Cor 6. 20.

1 Theſſ. 4. 13.

What remains then? But, that We treaſure up what has been deliver'd in our Hearts, and conclude with this moſt ſuitable Collect of our CHURCH:

O Almighty God, who out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings haſt ordain'd Strength, and madeſt Infants to glorifie Thee by their Deaths; mortifie and kill all Vices in us, and ſo ſtrengthen us by Thy Grace, that by the Innocency of our Lives, and Conſtancy of our Faith even to Death, we may glorifie Thy holy Name, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. AMEN.

Collect for *Innocents-Day.*

FINIS.